GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:528
ANSWERED ON:26.07.2000
GENETICALLY MODIFIED SEEDS
JAYASHREE BANERJEE

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Genetically Modified Seeds (GMS) are useful for increasing the agricultural production:

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such seeds are likely to be imported;

(d) whether these GMS will be issued to Indian Agro Research Institutes; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO)

(a)&(b): It has been reported that the genetically modified seeds have potential to increase agricultural productivity under biotic and abiotic stress conditions. However, there is no commercial exploitation of such seeds in India at present. Contained research trials of genetically modified crops are being carried out as per the guidelines of Review Committee on Genetic Manupulation under the Department of Biotechnology.

(c) to (e): At present, this Department has no proposal for import of genetically modified seeds. All genetically modified seeds require evaluation of environmental safety under the Environment Protection Act. Only when such seeds are evaluated in the Indian environment and found to be safe, would they be eligible for being imported into the country. The rules for any organisation in the private or public sector receiving such seeds will be governed by the Indian Laws which in succession presently requires first clearance of safety from the Ministry of Environment & Forests under the Environment Protection Actfor commercial use and from the Department of Biotechnology for research use.